Your Stories Inspire Me

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by swarmofknees

Summary

Author Will Gram reluctantly moves in with Hannibal Lecter a newly certified psychiatrist looking for someone to split rent with. Shortly after murders begin that perfectly match those in Will's books.

Chapter 1

It had been a good while since they had last met up. Alana was busy with her new job and Will's publisher had insisted on sending him on a small book tour to help pick up traction for his third book. They met at a small cookie cutter pancake place for breakfast, it was the first thing that had dragged Will into the city since he'd officially gotten back.

"I'm glad you could make it out here." Alana said biting into her scrambled eggs and toast. "I know we talk all the time but it's nice to see you in person for once. Must have been a hell of an early drive out though."

"It really wasn't that bad, no one's ever out driving anywhere near me until at least seven so I really only ran into traffic when I got closer to the city."

"Still your place is way too far from everything, I mean half the time I try to call you the signal is too spotty to get through and didn't you lose power for a month last year after that big storm."

"This again, is this really why you invited me out for breakfast? I've told you my place is fine. I like it."

"Look I get that it's important to you and you grew up in that house and everything but it is literally in the middle of the woods. You have to drive an hour and a half just to buy groceries. And as much as you hate to admit it not being around people that much is in fact bad for you, you need at least two to three in person social interactions per month to function."

"If you're concerned about me talking to people I think I've done enough of that in the past few weeks to stave off any hunger for at least a year."

"I'm just concerned about you." Alana reached across the table and gently grabbed Will's hand forcing him to look up from his plate of half eaten chocolate chip pancakes and meet her eyes. "If you moved into the city we could see each other more again too. I'm not asking you to interact with people you don't know I just don't think you should be living in a cabin that is falling apart more every time I see it that is in the middle of the woods where no one can reach you if something happens. After breakfast we're going to see an apartment-"

"You can lecture me all you want but I'm not moving! Besides I'm not exactly a best seller, I wouldn't be able to get an apartment by myself and you're practically the only person I know and assuming I'm remembering correctly you've got more then enough roommates."

"I'm not telling you that you have to rent the apartment I'm just telling you we have to go look at it. And it comes with a roommate so don't worry about that part."

Alana dragged Will to her car after they were done eating, witch was accomplished entirely in a begrudged stubborn silence due to Will's animosity towards any further conversation topics Alana might want to bring up. They left Will's car in the parking lot, Alana didn't trust

him not to drive back home if she just told him to follow her. Will slumped his head against the window like a child whose mother didn't get them the shiny new toy they had decided they needed while they were out. The car ride was silent, which was as good as Alana could have hoped for.

Alana took him to an apartment just on the outskirts of what could be considered the 'center' of the city. It was situated above a local bakery on a strip of road where the businesses lining either side were more independently owned then chain, though it was barely these days. "He said he'd be waiting for us to come in." Alana said as she led Will up the stairs. "If you hate him right away we can leave and I won't make you do this again, but at least try to give him a chance ok. He's really quite nice and I'm sure would make for a great roommate." She fumbled through her bag and pulled out a key with a plain paper key chain attached with the apartment number and address written on it. She pulled open the door slowly but stepped inside easily when she saw him sitting at a wooden dining table in sight of the door.

He was dressed in a suit, his newly graying hair perfectly in place, and though Will would hate to admit it from a first impression he seemed quite handsome. The stranger stood up nodding to Alana before walking towards Will with an extended hand, "You must be Will. I have heard much about you from Alana it is nice to make your acquaintance. My name is Hannibal and as you may have heard I am in dire need of a roommate."

Chapter 2

The apartment seemed nice. Even the high price was good compared to other places of its size in the area, splitting rent would make it something Will could afford. It might even be cheaper than all the repairs he was having to do on his cabin recently, especially if you take into account the gas prices. The kitchen and living room had no distinction between them other than the presence of an oven and sink on one end of the room and a couch on the other. The center of this common space is where Hannibal had sat at a table which was placed in the center of the room interrupting the seamless merge between the two spaces. The bathroom had a bath, not a guarantee in many apartments so that was a plus and there were two separate bedrooms that did lock and had different keys. So if Will were to live there he could confidently hole up in his room with the knowledge that he could not be disturbed. The space was small so the tour was quick Hannibal insisted on making them tea before they left so Will was forced to contemplate the possibility of moving more than just leaving and forgetting about it. Alana was quietly pleased with herself, Will hadn't insisted on leaving at any point and though he was quiet and she held the impression that Hannibal did not regard him with the utmost fondness they seemed to be pleasant enough to each other that this might just work out.

“Have you made any determinations regarding moving in? I do not mean to rush your considerations, you must take all the time you may require, it is just that rent is due in a few weeks and unfortunately my residency does not pay enough for me not to worry about having a roommate by then." Hannibal asked as he poured the tea into the teacups he had already placed in front of Will and Alana.

"I'm sure he loves the apartment." Said Alana.

"That is good to hear from you Miss. Bloom but I would rather hear it from my potential roommate himself."

Will had taken the warm teacup in his hands and let his figures tap on the sides of the cup. He didn't like the unexpected visit and he didn't like the pressure to make a decision so fast, but he understood where Hannibal was coming from if Will wasn't going to move in he needed to find someone else quickly. Will avoided Hannibal's gaze which had been centered on him since he first set foot in the apartment, the eye contact wouldn't help him think. This was a good deal, Will knew he should take it. But he hadn't avoided moving out of the dilapidated cabin that he had lived in since childhood just for the fun of it. Eyes pointed at the window looking past Hannibal and took a sip of the tea. It was hotter than he had expected and had a sort of tangy yet bitter taste that he should have expected from the smell. Will tried to hide his displeasure with the tea as he set down the cup.

"If you are not fond of the tea there is no need to drink it." Hannibal said, Will had thought he had done a good job masking his displeasure as not to be rude but evidently that was not the case. Though Alana looked puzzledly between Will and the teacup, which went noticed by will, she had been unable to surmise any dislike from Will even after their years of friendship.

"I have a dog." Will said. "Not particularly large more medium sized and she doesn't bark much. Would that be a problem?"

"I do not consider myself a lover of dogs. I would hope this dog is well trained at least?" Said Hannibal successfully hiding his guttural impulse to grimace at the idea of a dog making a mess of his home.

"Since when do you have a dog?" Asked Alana.

"I found her wandering the forest two weeks ago."

"And you just took her in? You could have taken her to a shelter instead."

"She doesn't need a shelter she needs a home. I can take care of her better than any shelter, why would I not take her in?"

"So just to be clear, you have recently acquired a stray dog that you would like to possibly bring into my home?" Despite his propriety and clear aim to please Will enough into moving in Hannibal was now the one who could not contain his discomfort with the idea of living with a dog.

"She's not a stray anymore she's mine. And I would only bring her here if I'm able to."

"Is she rid of fleas and will she ruin anything here?"

"She doesn't have fleas and we're working on training, she's making a lot of progress."

"I suppose I do not have other options. As long as she does not prove to be a bother to me she is welcome here with you."

After a moment or two more of silence Will said. "I think I will move in then."

Chapter 3

Will moved in three days later. Alana carried one of his few boxes and helped him unpack, and made sure to try to reassure Hannibal that Will's dog wouldn't ruin his perfectly clean apartment. Heidee was dark brown with short fur and a notch in her left ear she could be described as a small large dog, not the standard medium that Hannibal had been led to believe. She barked at Hannibal when she had first followed Will in and was immediately scolded for it. Hannibal didn't want to hover as Will was unpacking but he couldn't help but keep an eye on the dog, and was much reassured when she left him alone and followed Will at his heels not messing with anything. Soon after Alana left and Will closed his door and holed up in his room to finish his unpacking.

Getting a roommate was not ideal in Hannibal's mind especially when he did not know the person in question and even more so when he becomes forced to bring an animal into his home, but he had no other choice inflation and skyrocketing rent and all. He decided to prepare dinner early to calm himself.

He could have prepared something that took more active effort Hannibal decided after putting much of his dinner in the oven, he wouldn't have much to do for the next forty minutes or so. Will hadn't made a sound, at least not one Hannibal had heard and he had quite the keen ear. Hannibal wasn't sure if he was fully grateful for the lack of interaction that seemed evident with his roommate or slightly disappointed, it could be more interesting. Hannibal noticed a small box near the door that Will must have overlooked, he decided he could make it a nice gesture and bring it over to Will since he had nothing better to do. The box was opened when he got to it and Hannibal couldn't help but to satisfy some of his curiosity, he really didn't know anything about his new roommate and snooping though someone's stuff would scarcely be the most demented thing he'd done all week. Today if he decided to invite Will to have dinner with him.

The box was filled with books. All the same book in fact *Empty Grace* written by Will Gram. Hannibal hadn't pegged the grungy woodsman who could barely hold a conversation on his own as a writer. Let alone one good enough to get published. Hannibal picked up a copy and decided to begin reading through it while waiting to finish his dinner.

Willow stood frozen eyes wide mouth agape. Her father's fist clenched around the front of her hoodie pulling towards him, he looked down before shoving her away. "You're a young woman now it's time for you to suck it up and start wearing a bra! Listen to me for once in your life!" Willow stood still as he stormed away yelling over his shoulder, "Just get used to it!" Before he slammed the door and she herd his car start up in the driveway as he left for work.

Willow hunched over collapsing in on herself on a controlled fall to the floor. She knew how to deal with the yelling. She knew how to deal with him hitting her. It was her normal even if she knew it shouldn't be, this was new. She remembered a few months ago when they were grocery shopping. Walking around with the same back aching hunched posture she had worn for years, that her father had blessedly given up trying to pry her out of. Or so she'd thought.

He may have given up digging his nails into her shoulders to try to force them up, or screaming in her face to stand up straight. He knew she could outlast those old tactics. He said it all to casual leaning towards her and whispering in her ear. "You should stand up straight it'll make your breasts look better."

She'd tried to forget. Brush it off as a weird comment. It bared to striking a resemblance to what had just happened. It made her feel the same powerless, embarrassed, scared. She didn't know how to deal with this. She didn't know how much longer she could keep pretending if she remembered this. It was the last straw.

Hannibal had gotten rather far in the book before the timer for the oven went off. He was starting to think his new roommate would be quite interesting after all. The book was clearly at the very least extremely well reasurched and as a psychologist Hannibal would be inclined to say that much of what he'd read so far would have to be at least partially autobiographical. He could not be sure, but he could be sure that the mind of Will Gram was one he would like to become much more familiar with. Hannibal finished up his dinner, took the box full of books over to Will's door and knocked harshly and quickly twice. Will answered seconds later. "I believe you forgot this box." Hannibal started handing over the box to Will, "Would you care to join me for dinner? I have made more then enough, think of it as a welcome."

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